

Article - Criminal Law

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§10-402.

(a) Except as provided in subsections (b) and (f) of this section, a person may not remove or attempt to remove human remains from a burial site.

(b) Subject to subsection (c) of this section, the State's Attorney for a county may authorize in writing the removal of human remains from a burial site in the State's Attorney's jurisdiction:

(1) to ascertain the cause of death of the person whose remains are to be removed;

(2) to determine whether the human remains were interred erroneously;

(3) for the purpose of reburial; or

(4) for medical or scientific examination or study allowed by law.

(c) (1) Except as provided in paragraph (4) of this subsection, the State's Attorney for a county shall require a person who requests authorization to relocate permanently human remains from a burial site to publish a notice of the proposed relocation in a newspaper of general circulation in the county where the burial site is located.

(2) The notice shall be published in the newspaper one time.

(3) The notice shall contain:

(i) a statement that authorization from the State's Attorney is being requested to remove human remains from a burial site;

(ii) the purpose for which the authorization is being requested;

(iii) the location of the burial site, including the tax map and parcel number or liber and folio number; and

(iv) all known pertinent information concerning the burial site, including the names of the persons whose human remains are interred in the burial site, if known.

(4) (i) The State's Attorney may authorize the temporary relocation of human remains from a burial site for good cause, notwithstanding the notice requirements of this subsection.

(ii) If the person requesting the authorization subsequently intends to relocate the remains permanently, the person promptly shall publish notice as required under this subsection.

(5) The person requesting the authorization from the State's Attorney shall pay the cost of publishing the notice.

(6) The State's Attorney may authorize the removal of the human remains from the burial site after:

(i) receiving proof of the publication required under paragraph (1) of this subsection; and

(ii) 15 days after the date of publication.

(7) This subsection may not be construed to delay, prohibit, or otherwise limit the State's Attorney's authorization for the removal of human remains from a burial site.

(8) For a known, but not necessarily documented, unmarked burial site, the person requesting authorization for the removal of human remains from the burial site has the burden of proving by archaeological excavation or another acceptable method the precise location and boundaries of the burial site.

(d) (1) Any human remains that are removed from a burial site under this section shall be reinterred in:

(i) 1. a permanent cemetery that provides perpetual care;
or

2. a place other than a permanent cemetery with the agreement of a person in interest as defined under § 14–121(a)(4) of the Real Property Article; and

(ii) in the presence of:

1. a mortician, professional cemeterian, or other individual qualified in the interment of human remains;

2. a minister, priest, or other religious leader; or
3. a trained anthropologist or archaeologist.

(2) The location of the final disposition and treatment of human remains that are removed from a burial site under this section shall be entered into the local burial sites inventory or, if no local burial sites inventory exists, into a record or inventory deemed appropriate by the State's Attorney or the Maryland Historical Trust.

(e) This section may not be construed to:

(1) preempt the need for a permit required by the Maryland Department of Health under § 4-215 of the Health – General Article to remove human remains from a burial site; or

(2) interfere with the normal operation and maintenance of a cemetery, as long as the operation and maintenance of the cemetery are performed in accordance with State law.

(f) (1) Subject to paragraphs (2) and (3) of this subsection, human remains or the remains of a decedent after cremation, as defined in § 5-508 of the Health – General Article, may be removed from a burial site within a permanent cemetery and reinterred in:

- (i) the same burial site; or
- (ii) another burial site within the boundary of the same permanent cemetery.

(2) The following persons, in the order of priority stated, may arrange for a reinterment of remains under paragraph (1) of this section:

- (i) the surviving spouse or domestic partner of the decedent;
- (ii) an adult child of the decedent;
- (iii) a parent of the decedent;
- (iv) an adult brother or sister of the decedent;
- (v) a person acting as a representative of the decedent under a signed authorization of the decedent; or

(vi) the guardian of the person of the decedent at the time of the decedent's death, if one has been appointed.

(3) (i) The reinterment under paragraph (1) of this subsection may be done without the need for obtaining the authorization of the State's Attorney under subsection (b) of this section or providing the notice required under subsection (c) of this section.

(ii) 1. A person who arranges for the reinterment of remains within a permanent cemetery under paragraph (1)(ii) of this subsection, within 30 days after the reinterment, shall publish a notice of the reinterment in a newspaper of general circulation in the county where the permanent cemetery is located.

2. The notice shall be published in the newspaper one time.

3. The notice shall contain:

A. a statement that the reinterment took place;

B. the reason for the reinterment;

C. the location of the burial site from which remains have been removed, including the tax map and parcel number or liber and folio number;

D. the location of the burial site in which the remains have been reinterred, including the tax map and parcel number or liber and folio number; and

E. all known pertinent information concerning the burial sites, including the names of the persons whose cremated remains or human remains are interred in the burial sites, if known.

(iii) Within 45 days after the reinterment, a person who arranges for a reinterment of remains under paragraph (1)(ii) of this subsection shall provide a copy of the notice required under this paragraph to the Office of Cemetery Oversight.

(4) The location of a reinterment of remains under paragraph (1) of this subsection shall be entered into the inventory of the local burial sites or, if no inventory exists, into a record or inventory deemed appropriate by the Maryland Historical Trust.

(g) A person who violates this section is guilty of a misdemeanor and on conviction is subject to imprisonment not exceeding 5 years or a fine not exceeding \$10,000 or both.

(h) A person who violates this section is subject to § 5–106(b) of the Courts Article.

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